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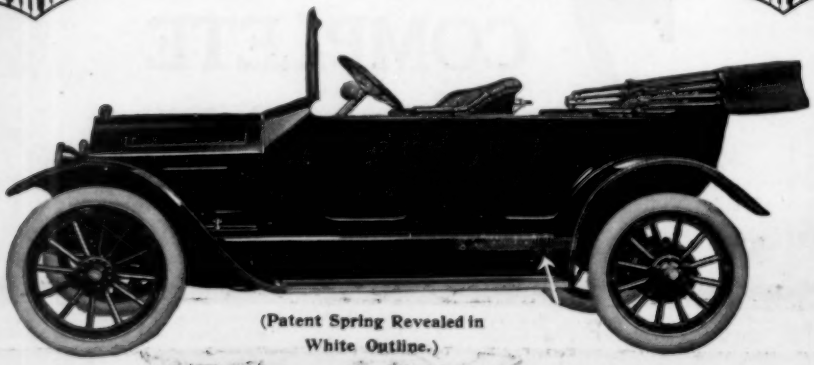

(Patent Spring Revealed in White Outline.)

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The Knight Heir.*

BY FRANK B. VAN ALEN.

OLD Doc Knight had a son. He was of the vintage of 1885 and labeled Ronald. He burned the midnight coin 365 nights in a year except leap year, then it happened 366. Fizz, frolic and folly were the F blocks in his alphabet of life. He was born with a silver champagne cork in his mouth and before he could speak, he cried for a bottle. What can you expect in futures for a child who starts like that?

The old "Doc" had loved the vine essence himself in his youth. Hence he looked upon his son's gay life as a matter of course. He never grew tired of praising the boy's merits although, in reality, they were more scarce than quiet women in a bridge club, and he always called him, with a deep light of pride in his eyes, "My son and heir."

He dinned that into the ears of society so constantly that the boy caught a sobriquet from it. From rathskeller to roof garden, from New York to Newport, from London to the Riviera, he was known as "The Knight Heir."

The old "Doc" told society that the one woman would redeem Ronald. Straightway the pulchritude of Manhattan planned their works and worked their plans to save the piled-up millions from the melting warmth of the "Knight Heir."

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The boy was pursued. He Blerioted! The chase kept up. He Curtissed! He was up in the air over petticoats, more up in the air than lingerie around the Flatiron building in a March wind. Still the fair ones besieged him. He vowed that he would cut society and live at the club only, among men only. He vowed he would never mix up with women again. Understand now he was no misogynist, as Henry James would say; in reality he loved all women, collectively and individually. He hated only the designing female who wanted to pinion his wings and store him in the hangar of matrimony till death or divorce "do us part." He hated the women who were Dianas, modern huntresses of "dear" fellows with golden-lined hides and "dough's" eyes. That's what he hated.

And that's what he found Kitty Bentell wasn't; that's why he didn't hate Kitty; that's why, on the contrary, he rather liked her. So you see there *was* one woman, but put the social register with the consommé stock, she was a working girl, so Dame Rumor said.

As well make soup out of a whalebone as wed a working girl with the "Knight Heir." Society found out about the woman and doors banged. The boy could not have entered the golden drawing-rooms had he so desired.

He became a pariah, an outcast, a misguided creature in the toils of a low-born woman. The pulchritude of Manhattan could not believe. How could any woman make an impression? How was it possible to thrill ice-bound Ronald? Love laughs at analyses, at reasons, at whys and wherefores. What the warmth of the socially elect could not affect, the little working girl knew how to do; hers was the flame that thawed the frostiness of the cold "Knight Heir."

This is how she did it.

She picked out her grandfather in England, her father in France and she put herself in America. She was the product of a triple alliance that gave her charm, piquancy, the gift of languages, a love for the beautiful, and culture. England made her statuesque; France, emotional; America, alert. She knew opportunity when she saw it and she embraced it instantly. Who then would not be Opportunity?

Katherine Bentell had corn-colored hair, rose-petaled cheeks and violet eyes. With all that, she wasn't a vegetarian! Animal spirits gave her life, zest, éclat, verve! In every movement she made she showed it all. The day she sat on a bench in Central Park and drew Ronald to her side she showed it more than ordinarily.

Young Knight had just landed after his final flight from the social aviation field. He was taking a walk through the park to determine his future course on earth. He had walked an hour or so, enjoying the cool autumn air, before he espied the one bench with its depositary, the one woman.

Then he flew to what he had flown from. She had dropped her handkerchief. He stepped forward and picked it up. She smiled her thanks. Ronald started away, looked back, caught her still smiling and returned to her side.

"Why are you smiling?" he asked, disgruntled.

"Trying to imitate a tooth-powder ad."

Ronald was nettled. This minx was actually making fun of him.

"Am I so ludicrous?"

She gave him a searching look and answered gravely, very gravely: "Yes, you are."

Ronald jumped ten feet mentally; physically, he sat down by her side.

"Why?" His voice was eager.

"You look so important and you're not."

"How do you know I'm not?"

"You couldn't be with a face like yours." She smiled again.

"What is the matter with my face?"

"It's as vacant as the face of a clock but different, because there are works behind that."

"Then you think that there's nothing behind my face?"

"Nothing." She laughed bitterly. "You're nothing but a walking mug." The girl seemed to wince at the expression as though it jarred on her.

Ronald fidgeted. He was not used to having the truth slammed at him in this manner. He considered the slammer and he was not angry; on the contrary, he was beginning to like this dermatological analysis. She insinuated that he had no brains; she became a vacuum cleaner right before his eyes and he was supplying the vacuum.

"You're certainly frank," he muttered after a little pause.

"You've never heard the truth before. I believe it isn't the custom to speak it in your set, Mr. Knight."

"Mr. Knight!"

"Of course I know you. Do you suppose your press agent hasn't taken good care of that? Every shop girl, cloak model and waitress knows all about you. We are told what time you get up, how you take a bath in a gold tub, what you eat and drink—

principally drink—where you go, what you do. Every time you buy a collar-button they put your picture in the paper. And it disgusts us." She waved her arm in a comprehensive gesture to indicate that "Us" included the entire working-girl population of the great city.

Knight felt like a fool. "I never knew they did such things," he said lamely.

She sniffed.

"Probably you don't know either that every girl in New York is dying to marry you."

A frightened look came into his eyes. "I certainly am aware of that."

"But it isn't true. I know a hundred girls who wouldn't wipe their dirty shoes on you and I am one of them."

"Then we can be friends." He grasped her hand and shook it fiercely. What made him do it, he never knew. Perfectly unconscious of his sudden gesture, of the saunterers in the mall, oblivious to everything, he held her hand for a fraction of a second and looked into her eyes.

"Romantic, isn't it!" she sneered, as she returned his look. "It will make a whole page in a Sunday magazine supplement."

"I hope it lasts long enough to make two pages," he laughed.

"Then you do like notoriety?"

"If you are Notoriety, I do." And then and there he dubbed her "Miss Notoriety."

They parted soon after that and Knight returned to the club. He entered the smoking-room in a good humor but the first person he met twitted him about his friend in the park.

It was a dark and stormy "Knight" and the reign was falling fast, the reign of a heart impervious to woman's wiles. All the fellows were "on" to his encounter with the girl and Ronald gritted his teeth in disgust. Why the devil should everything blow into the club?

"Hear you are going out of the state," a dilettante newspaper man shouted at him.

"Where?" he bit.

"Into the State of Matrimony. Look out Ronny. There's one in every Union until Civil War causes secession and sets up the Confederate State of Alimony."

"What a damn fool you are, Blakely!" Knight banged out of the room.

That night the fellow was so uneasy that he neglected his old

haunts and walked the streets. It was a warm night despite the calendar location of the date. The season was late enough to bring in the fall styles but warm enough to keep them in the shop windows until summer really waned.

Knight felt vaguely uneasy. He tried to analyze his condition. Was he the victim of nerves? Miss Notoriety probably thought he possessed nerve. Difference between the two! Singular, isn't it?

At any rate he could set his mind on none of the usual evening pastimes. He wandered. Some psychological wires pulled him back to the park, to the very bench where he had found the girl that afternoon.

He felt a thrill when he saw the wooden seat again. It was occupied. His heart stood still! What a desecration! The trampiest vagrant he had ever seen sprawled on its slats with the careless air of ownership. Knight was furious. To think that such a creature should usurp the place where she had sat. He wanted to throw the man out, to—

"Hello, Boss!" The vagrant was looking at him sharply and somewhere in his anatomy Knight had the vague presentiment that he was about to be "touched." A little touch of such a nature makes half the world "skin."

"Lend us a quarter, Boss?"

Knight hurried on and the vagrant followed. Beneath a lamp a few feet distant the "touch" artist jogged his elbow and Knight turned indignantly.

"Why it's old Knight's son," the blear-eyed sot guffawed. "Me daughter said as she'd talked to you this afternoon and here in the park too."

Ronald winced, tossed him a coin and sped away, literally sped out of the park. Daughter! Daughter! His head throbbed with the connection; that old besotted tattered hobo's daughter! Never! He must be going stale at last. The D. T.'s were upon him! He hurried to the club and locked himself in his room.

The next day at five Knight was back at the bench. He convinced himself that it was his duty to see the girl again, to find out just what her environment was and to help her to better things. He went back then in the role of a philanthropist, his first performance in the character at any stage of the game. It made him feel older and more dignified and he determined to impress the girl so strongly with this deeper side of his character (which didn't exist) that she would drop her bantering tone and ridiculous familiarity of the previous day and show instead, a grateful respect.

In short he had smarted under the girl's jests, and wounded pride demanded that the little chit be shown her place. All this had become plain after meeting her father. He had returned her mood at the first meeting but one circumstance forbade that it should happen again. Father was that circumstance with a capital C.

It was late when the lady appeared. Ronald tried to hide, as it certainly was a bad start for his dignity that she should see him actually waiting for her.

"I see you, Pajamas," she trilled.

He came forward stiffly, and stiffly he bowed.

"My, but you're formal. Didn't you hear me call?"

"I heard nothing that sounded like my name," he said coldly.

"I didn't shout your name; that would have been rude. I used instead the pet word that I have selected for you." Such was her code of etiquette.

"Pet word." He frowned so seriously that his hat slipped over one eye. "I distinctly heard you say 'Pajamas.'" He looked abashed as he straightened the derby.

"Right. You see I go in for diminutives but Knightie sounds so feminine, I had to switch the gender. Isn't Pajamas correct?"

"Miss—Miss—," he stammered, "I am interested in you solely on the basis of helpfulness. I realize that one in your station may be suffering the most abject misery and yet put forward a joking manner, at least I've read so. In being philanthropic I want you to understand—er—er—that it is because of my deep convictions that the rich should help the less fortunate, that I came here today. Yesterday when we talked I feared to embarrass you with questions as to your station and place in life; I did not feel postitive that you needed help. After meeting your father last night I realized the truth and my duty became evident."

This and much more he stammered out with face set and harsh voice. His eyes never left her, however, and within his heart there were little tremors that made him afraid. He felt that he was impersonating a barbed wire fence around a field of cotton.

"What's your name?" he asked suddenly.

"You called me 'Miss Notoriety,' yesterday, won't that do?"

"Away with yesterday; I hadn't met your father then."

"Oh, he's made the difference in you then. You weren't impressed with him, possibly."

There was a silence for some time.

"Does he ever beat you?" Ronald asked fiercely as a sudden thought darted into his head.

"Once in a while—at pinochle. It's the only game we play." She laughed merrily. "You're certainly serious, aren't you? Would you like the story of my life?" Her voice became low pitched and intense.

"If it is not too painful to you." He sat down on the bench, on the very edge, as far away from her as he could get. Philanthropy demanded that.

"I'll leave out the sad parts," she began. "You shall hear the painless life history of your humble servant. My father was a gay dog and my mother, a cat; I am the only product of this domestic union. If I had been a boy they would have called me Fido; being what I am, they named me Kitty. My father had enough money to educate me and bury my mother. Now he's broke and I'm his only asset. He expects me to make a wealthy marriage and I am willing if—" She turned suddenly and put her hand on his arm. "You want to be philanthropic; you want to help me. There's a way."

Ronald's uneasiness became so great that he nearly fell off the bench.

"What—is it?" he asked fearfully.

"Find me a wealthy husband."

"Are you never serious?" His tone was chiding.

"I am thoroughly serious."

"Then I cannot help you." He arose stiffly.

"Please. Father has picked out a man and I've agreed but I don't like him and I'm looking for another whom I can respect."

"How can your father pick out a wealthy man when—"

"No matter," she interrupted quickly. "He did it and I suppose I'll have to go through with it but I don't care a fig for Archie Blakely."

"Archie Blakely!" Knight jumped up as though hurried by some physical agency. "Archie Blakely," he repeated vaguely. The idea was absurd. This vagabond, probably born and now living in a tenement on the East Side, engaged to the man of letters and club wit, Archibald Ruggles Blakely! Ridiculous! The girl must have read his name somewhere and just hit upon it to mystify him.

"Do you know Archie?" she asked the second time before Knight heard her.

"He's a member of my club."

"Did he ever mention me?"

"As I do not know your name I can't say."

"He would call me Kitty; he always does."

"I never heard him mention any Kitty except in a quiet game."

"He's a great poker player, isn't he?"

Knight was nonplussed. She had him right on that.

"He taught me how to play," she went on dimpling, "but I'm a poor gambler."

"Most gamblers are," he scoffed. He felt that the girl spoke the truth, though how any man in Blakely's position could take up with such a girl, even if she were educated, he could not understand. How could Archie accept a father-in-law like that? Knight was disgusted and he showed it as he drew away from the girl.

"I am going," he said between his teeth. "I hope you make Blakely happy." He bowed stiffly and sauntered off, oblivious to the paroxysm of laughter that was assailing her.

Knight ran across Blakely at the club that same evening. The poker player par excellence was sprawled over a table semi-soused and Ronald took advantage of his opportunity to sober the fellow.

"Hear you're engaged, Arch," he shouted, slapping him on the back. "Congrats, she's a peach."

"Hic—hic—," answered the wit.

"Good family, too, I imagine."

"Hic—hic—."

"—though I haven't looked up her forbears, I know you're particular about such things."

"Hic—" Blakely straightened up. "Oh, it's you, Ronny. Say get me a—hic—drink, will you—I'm so dry—"

"Bar's closed, old pal. Now about this girl—"

"What girl?"

"Kitty."

"Kitty—hic—Kitty who?"

"Your fiancee."

"My—hic—what?"

"Oh, cut it out and brace up. Can't you see I'm trying to congratulate you? I met her by accident, she's a good looker, you—"

"You've met her—hic—but dammit I never have. Who is she?"

Knight laughed. He knew Blakely and he knew that, be he ever so soused, he still retained enough brain to assimilate common sense.

"Trying to keep it quiet, eh," he went on. "Arch, it's out, the girl herself told me."

Blakely got up with a lurch, slightly sobered.

"See here Knight, talk sense. I don't know any girl by the name of Kitty—b-b-but one, she's—"

"What?" interrupted Knight quickly.

"—my mother's maid."

"What of it!" burst out Ronald, "you're engaged to her."

"The devil I am."

"Sure goods."

"But I never spoke to her."

"Eye glances did the trick then."

Blakely was perspiring heavily. He mopped his brow. "Look here Knight, do you mean to say that I got engaged to my mother's maid when I was pickled and forgot it?"

"You can't forget it; she'll sue for—"

"Good Lord, man! You aren't serious?"

"Kitty is; her father favors the match." Knight laughed when he thought of Blakely and that father.

"Buck up, old chap, and face the music. Lohengrin up the aisle and Mendelssohn back for yours. Picked your best man yet?"

"But Ron, it's utterly impossible, I—" He began to pace the floor, thoroughly sobered now as though by a cold douche. "I've made an ass of myself at some time or another; I'm going to cut and run." He started for the door as if to put his words into action at once; Knight grabbed him at the sill.

"Not so fast. I represent the lady's interests and you've got to keep your promise."

"The devil you say! What interest have you in Kitty?"

"As the affianced bride of my friend she demands my protection. Kitty shall be Mrs. Blakely or I'm a duffer."

"You're a duffer then." Blakely gave him a push and stumbled out the door. Knight flung himself into a chair and roared with laughter. "So Kitty lied to me, eh? What is that clever minx up to? His mother's maid! She hasn't the air but—" He pondered the affair over the fire for an hour, then went to bed. When he awakened in the morning light he found himself vastly troubled, not on Blakely's account but on his own.

"If Kitty isn't engaged," he kept thinking—"if Kitty isn't engaged —well what of it? Dammit what if she isn't engaged, what difference does it make anyway?"

He found her again that afternoon at the same place. She was more serious than he had ever seen her.

"Mr. Knight," she began at sight of him, "I am sorry I spoke the way I did yesterday about Mr. Blakely. I am afraid I gave you the impression that I know him when the fact is that I have never seen him in my life."

Knight was staggered but somehow he felt relieved. Did he imagine that feeling or was it real?

"Then you aren't—" he started to burst forth and stopped.

"Aren't what?"

"His mother's maid," he went on in confusion.

The girl laughed until she cried. In a moment she was serious again.

"I fear that I don't know his mother. I have read his name and stories of his gambling exploits in the Sunday supplements just as I have read about you but that is all—"

"Why did you make a fool of me yesterday?" he demanded fiercely.

"Don't lay your mental condition to me, and beside, it wasn't done yesterday." Knight ground his teeth at the jibe.

"See here, Kitty—Kitty Blank, I am through. You may think you can call me empty-headed, brainless, a fool, everything, but you can't. From this time on our meetings are at an end." He got up angrily. "I imagined you were a lady but your general attitude towards me shows I was mistaken."

"Now Mr. Knight, listen a moment. We met by chance; you, a professed woman-hater and I, a seeker after adventure. I chaffed you a little and now you are becoming angry. It's all in the game. Your father thought—"

"My father," he interrupted fiercely. "Don't bring him in, even if you did see his picture in those infernal Sunday papers."

"Oh, I know your father well!" she said seriously, "better than I do you."

"And I know yours," he blurted cynically.

"I'm afraid not, since he's been dead five years."

"A lie," he muttered ungallantly, "I talked to him over there a few nights ago."

"You thought you did," she smiled sweetly. "I paid that hobo a dollar to say certain words to you. It seems he did his work well."

"You're a little devil," he said sharply, and looking straight at her he caught the smile rippling into dimples in her cheek, curving her lips and twinkling her eyes. Her look held him and his jaw dropped. What kind of freak was she and what was her game anyway? For a minute he believed that she did know the "governor."

"What was the necessity for such deceit?" he went on more calmly.

"No necessity," she murmured sweetly. "We just did it to give you a jounce. It worked pretty well."

"But why the jounce?"

"Father's orders."

"You're insane." A pause. "Do you mean to say that the 'governor' gave you the idea of doing such a fool thing?"

"Yep; and he gave me the dollar besides." Again she dimpled.

"Then you're both crazy." He lit a cigarette carelessly and blew the smoke in her face purposely.

She pursed her lips and blew it away. (Gee, but they were kissable.)

"Not quite Ronald." It was the first time she had called him by that name and he started. "You know how eager your father is to have you marry. You were so slow about it that he decided to test you with a new kind of girl. He chose me with a sot of a father to pique your vanity, arouse your sympathy and command your love."

"The 'governor's' certainly a fool."

"But myself. Do you think I deserve that title, Ronald?" She held out her hand. "It's true I entered this game in a spirit of fun but I've grown to like you. Will you marry me?"

"Certainly not." Knight's answer was fiercely negative.

"Love comes where it will and I have always hated men and loved adventure for its own sake. I met your father in Canada last year at the Governor-general's ball when I was presented at the Court of the Province. I have been called a wayward girl in Ottawa ever since I was a child. Your father heard stories of my youth for he was the guest of my uncle with whom he transacted his business up there. He knew I was coming to New York and shortened his visit so as to accompany me. I have been his guest for six weeks as you would have known if you lived at home. He told me about your disgust with the fair sex and I wagered him that if the right sort of a girl came along and asked you to marry her, you'd do it. Will you marry me?"

"Certainly not."

"We took it as a joke at first but after I saw your picture and one of Blakely's which were in your room, I became infatuated with both of you. I went to your father and he suggested, jokingly, the park-bench campaign, poor but honest parentage, brute of a father and all that. I tried to awaken your jealousy with Blakely's name but failed. Of course there can't be jealousy where there isn't love. Now I could be—Ronald, will you marry me?"

"Certainly—not."

"But Ronald," she drew closer to him and put her arm on his sleeve, "my affections, placed, never waver. I love you. Unmaidenly as it may sound and untrue as it may seem after the way I've played with you, it is true. I love you."

Her voice grew soft and sincerity rang in her tones.

"It is no jest, Ronald, it is God's own truth."

Knight jumped up and faced her quizzically.

"Will you marry me, Ronald?" she asked again, and her face flamed with blushes.

For several seconds there was silence. The park was growing dusk and the moon, just rising, cast half-shadows among the shrubbery.

Knight sat down again at her side, rather closer than before, and somehow his right hand felt wandering as though he didn't know what to do with it.

Again the soft voice quivered, "Will you marry me?"

He found out what to do with that right hand, and even more softly than she, he answered:

"Certainly—"

She waited breathlessly but there was no—"not."

A month later the engagement of Katherine Bentell and Ronald Knight was announced. Ronald received the glad hands of his club friends and the cold shoulders of his one-time lady admirers.

From Blakely, who had not heard the news, he received a cablegram from Hong Kong, which read: "Just arrived. Shall not return until both you and Kitty are in the insane asylum."

Barney's Troublesome Foot.*

JESSIE NAY-WAGONER.

BARNEY BETTERMAN, being the youngest of the four Betterman sons, was his mother's pride and pet, and, as she was wont to tell her patient neighbors, Barney was the only one of the four who had distinguished himself in a business way. For while he was yet a mere lad, he had left the little farm in southern Illinois and had boldly plunged into the very busiest city in his state—Chicago. From the reports with which he was very careful to supply his family occasionally, they learned that he had met with most wonderful success. Accordingly, the Bettermans, as a family, were very proud of their one successful member.

And Barney was very proud of himself. In his heart he knew that his success was of the threadbare sort, but he was proud of the way he had kept this fact from his family and friends. Barney was ignorant and superstitious, and it was his aim in life to keep everyone with whom he came in contact from discovering it. Every time his employer told him anything at all concerning his duties, it was always, "Yes, yes, Mr. Conway, I know! I understand!" never dreaming how patent it was to everyone just how little he knew.

As is often the case with the city chap who has come from the country, Barney was a bit ashamed of his family. It was a point of great grief with him that his mother should earn her pin-money by selling soap which she ordered in small quantities and sold with little profit. And then, compared with the fastidious people with whom he associated during business hours, his whole family appeared to him as a bunch that wouldn't do. But Barney was very careful to keep his feelings on the subject well guarded. He seldom came home and only wrote often enough to make the arrival of a letter from him an important family event.

Just now Barney was in sore distress. For some time he had been annoyed by severe pains in his right ankle. He had borne

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the suffering silently for he couldn't bear the idea of having anyone pity him. But for the last three days he had been unable to be at his work as the ankle had swollen so that he couldn't wear his shoe. Barney had applied all of the home remedies of which he knew to no purpose and he now realized that he must consult a physician at once as the pain was becoming unbearable. This was going to be a trying ordeal for Barney as he was pretty much of a coward and terribly afraid of being hurt. But, as usual, he determined to betray no hint of what was in his mind, and summoning his boldest expression, he presented himself at the office of Dr. Smilcutt.

All during the examination, Barney never took his eyes from the doctor's face. Presently, in his very gravest manner, Dr. Smilcutt announced, "My dear boy, I am very much afraid that the trouble is of a tubercular nature. Of course, I can't be sure. It may be only rheumatic."

"Oh, yes, yes, I know! I understand!" came Barney's characteristic reply. "It's tubercular, I feel sure," he went on, wanting to appear very wise.

The doctor scanned Barney's face carefully and discovered that his expression belied the assurance of his words. But realizing that Barney's assumed wisdom and courage would make it easier for him, he went on, "Well, well, I'm glad you do understand! And since you do know so much about it you will know that if it is tubercular it will mean amputation. And I assure you it isn't a desirable task to have to break the news of a necessary amputation. But, of course, since you know that the foot must be removed in case the trouble does prove to be tubercular, the sooner we get it off, the better for you. What do you say to having it done to-morrow at St. Michael's?"

Barney's jaw dropped but was brought to with a snap as Barney gulped once or twice as if he were about to choke, and then acquiesced with, "Yes, yes, I know! I understand that to-morrow would be none too soon. Yes, we'll say to-morrow at St. Michael's. And—and, Doctor, will you kindly make the necessary arrangements?"

"Of course, I'll see to everything. And by the way, you had better go right on down to the hospital as soon as you make whatever private arrangements you may find necessary."

"Yes, yes, I know! I'll go down at once—that is, as soon as I get off an important letter."

"Chances are it isn't tubercular," mused Dr. Smilcutt, as Barney

disappeared. "And I could have comforted him with the suggestion if he had given me the chance. But he wanted to impress me with his unbounded wisdom and courage. Well, let him stick it out!"

Barney's heart had gone down with a bump when Dr. Smilcutt had pronounced his sentence, and while on his way to his room he discovered that he was very weak and faint.

"But I mustn't give up," he kept telling himself, "for he thinks I am brave and that I know all about it."

However, Barney discovered that it wasn't so easy to keep brave when he sat down to write to his mother. He knew that he could tell anything to his mother, even if it did savor of superstition and cowardice, and she wouldn't notice it, for she was even more superstitious and cowardly than he. So he told her the whole pitiful story and ended by giving specific directions for the burial of his foot which he told her he would have expressed to her at once, for the reason that he knew no one else would see as perfectly to its being buried as it should be. Then he went on to tell her how he had heard that if a foot or hand that had been amputated were not properly buried the owner would suffer terribly from it all his life long. So he begged that she would see that his foot was buried with the toes pointing to the north.

After Barney had finished and mailed his letter, he very calmly notified his employer of his approaching misfortune, and took his way to St. Michael's where he was made as comfortable as possible according to instructions from Dr. Smilcutt.

On the following morning, Barney asked Dr. Smilcutt, as a special favor, to express his foot to his mother, whose address he had carefully written out, as soon as the operation was over.

Nurses, internes, and assistants were alike amazed at Barney's great wisdom about his case, and at his unusual fortitude in the face of such a calamity.

No one could understand the wise little smile with which Dr. Smilcutt went about his preparations. But when the anæsthetic had been administered, the foot opened and no trace of tubercular trouble found, the doctor spoke:

"I half suspected that this wasn't tubercular, but this wise young man wouldn't give me a chance to tell him so. He was just so dreadfully afraid that I would discover how utterly ignorant and cowardly he is. Now, he's got to pay for it. He'll believe his foot is off if we tell him so, and we'll fix the bandages so he can't tell the difference. And if he complains of pains in his toes, tell him that's because his foot hasn't been properly buried, and he'll believe it.

His letters from home are to be held for him for a few days, or until we tire of the joke. And understand, I'll knife the first fellow who gives it away!" and Dr. Smilcutt proceeded to close the foot and cover it with bandages of a shapeless mass.

Barney's letter plunged his mother into deepest grief. With the other members of the family gathered around her, she read and re-read with agonizing moans and repetitions. At last she controlled her grief long enough to advise Barney's brothers:

"We must do exactly as the dear boy asks, for it may be his last request. In the morning, you, James, and Bolivar, drive in to Mason's Express Office and get the precious foot. Then take it down to the old walnut tree where he used to go to gather nuts, and bury it there with the toes to the north just as he directs."

On the following morning, James and Bolivar solemnly went on their way to the express office where they found a small box awaiting them. Neither one wanted to carry it, but Bolivar felt that it wasn't showing the proper respect for Barney to mince matters, so he gingerly picked it up, and placing it carefully under his arm, started for the old walnut tree with James moping behind, carrying a spade.

Bolivar was gently lowering the box into the deep hole they had dug when James stopped him with, "We'll have to open the box before we're sure we have the toes to the north!"

"Well, open it if you want to! 'B-blamed if I will!"

"But he'll suffer if we don't get 'em to the north!"

Bolivar looked the box over. On one end there was a small X.

"Well, now, they've marked the end the toes are in! See that!" and he pointed triumphantly to the X. James was willingly convinced, so they buried the box.

As Dr. Smilcutt expected, Barney didn't mention his foot for several days. Finally, he could keep still no longer. As an attendant was pushing him from the dressing-room, he burst out with, "Do you know, Doctor, I feel as if I really had my foot on and the toes ache dreadfully."

"Oh, that's because your foot has been buried the wrong way!"

"How should it be buried?"

"Toes to the east!"

Poor Barney! As soon as he reached his room, he called for a messenger and sent the following wire to his mother:

"Turn toes to east."

And his mother hurried James and Bolivar out to do his bidding.

Cleaning the earth off the box, they found the X which they carefully turned to the east.

It was not at all difficult for the attendants to keep the knowledge of Barney's foot from him, as he always kept his head lying flat, feigning indifference when it was really the fear of seeing blood that kept him from attempting to watch the dressing.

Several days later, Barney confided his uneasiness to an interne—fearing Dr. Smilcutt's ridicule.

"Do you know, my toes are fairly killing me, and I know to a certainty that my foot has been buried with the toes to the east."

The interne turned his back to conceal the mirth in his face, but managed to steady his voice enough to blurt out, "My heavens, man! They ought to turn to the west!"

Poor Barney! Once again the call for a messenger, and once again a message to his mother:

"Turn toes to west."

And his mother, true to her trust, hurried James and Bolivar out to change the foot. And they, just as carefully as before, looked for the little X and buried it facing the west.

But Barney's foot still hurt. So he decided that he would go home and bury it himself. Accordingly, on the following morning, he greeted Dr. Smilcutt with, "Doctor, I'm getting a bit homesick. Don't you think I could go home in a day or two, for a little visit and rest?"

"Certainly, certainly," agreed Dr. Smilcutt, "it is just the thing for you to do. I dare say your mother can dress the wound until it is perfectly well."

"Yes, yes indeed! I'm sure she can!"

"Very well then, I'll see you off to-morrow!" And Dr. Smilcutt went out to give instructions to the internes.

All the way home, Barney raged inwardly. He was sure the boys had never buried his foot at all. If they had, he knew they had paid no attention whatever to the toes. Well, he would see to it himself. After all, it is the only way to ever get anything done the way you want it.

By the time Barney reached home, his rage had somewhat subsided, for the way was long and he found himself very weak and very tired and his foot hurt terribly.

"Why didn't they use more care in burying it?" he moaned to himself.

At last he was at home again with his family gathered around him, wondering, sympathizing, pitying, adoring. They patiently

listened to all Barney had to say, and then they assured him again and again with what care they had obeyed instructions.

Barney was stumped. At last he appealed to his mother:

"Mother, would you mind looking at my wound? Maybe you can tell what makes it hurt so!"

Gently, with every care, his mother unwrapped the yards and yards of bandage while Barney lay back with closed eyes.

Suddenly the last bandage fell off and Barney's mother sat rigid with staring eyes while the brothers stood as if paralyzed. Barney opened his eyes and raised his head to see what the awful silence meant and there, in his mother's lap, lay his foot—attached to his leg in a perfectly natural way. The group of faces furnished a study in every variety of expression.

"Is that my foot?" asked Barney helplessly, with some sort of fear in his mind that it might prove a wax one which Dr. Smilcutt had attached in some scientific manner.

"It's your own dear foot," his mother assured him, "for there's the scar on your little toe where you cut it on a broken bottle when you were two years old." Barney rubbed his eyes unbelievingly.

"But—but, we buried it!" stammered Bolivar.

"Yes, we buried it!" echoed James, with protruding eyes. And to James and Bolivar, this fact was truth conclusive. Barney felt sure they were lying and didn't want to confess that they were caught. But his mother, who would never have doubted one of her boys, said, "Go dig up the box and let's see what's in it!"

Obediently they went and soon returned with the box on which they defiantly located the little X. Breathlessly they stood while their mother, with the manner of one who has long been used to forging ahead, opened the box. And there, neatly wrapped in pink tissue paper lay her latest order of highly-perfumed violet soap.

A Ten-Minute Problem.*

BY ALBERT GOLDIE AND DULCIE DEAMER.

HIS is a detective story without a mystery. A man has been murdered and we know who killed him —we know the motive for the crime; we know where he is to be found.

But read on—there is a riddle for you to solve and you love riddles. Sit down for ten minutes with Detective Jim Glover and think it out. See if you possess the same reasoning faculty that he does. We give you ten minutes, no more, for that is all the time that this clever American sleuth-hound will need before he solves this strange enigma—before he will lead you to the murderer and place the handcuffs on his wrists.

Here is your evidence:

Norman Ewing, the brilliant crown prosecutor of Bombay, was found dead early one morning in the grounds surrounding his bungalow. One of his servants discovered him there, and aroused the household. Ewing was unmarried; an old maiden sister kept house for him and she, stunned by the shock, was barely able to reach the telephone and ring for the police before she collapsed completely.

When Inspector Montgomery arrived he found Ewing lying flat on his face about a dozen steps from the garden hedge, and a couple of feet from the path that ran to the bungalow—a bullet wound in his back, his clothing soaked with blood. It was found that the attorney's bed had not been slept in and everything indicated that the crime had been committed while he was returning home on the previous night. When the news had spread through the city, Raymond Parkinson, a rising young barrister, came to the police station, his face haggard with horror.

"I was the last to see Mr. Ewing alive," he told the inspector who had returned to his office. "We were working late last night on that sedition charge against Baji Rao which is to be tried in the Criminal Sessions to-morrow. Mr. Ewing briefed me you know, as his junior.

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Shortly after midnight, we left Mr. Ewing's office in my car. I dropped him at his gate, and then proceeded to my own home. The murderer must have been lying in wait in the big hedge that surrounds Mr. Ewing's garden."

The inspector nodded. "That is evident," he said, "from the fact that the hedge has been broken through just opposite the place where the body was found."

"But who—who could have done this thing?"

"I think I can answer that question," said a voice in the doorway. Parkinson turned, and saw a well-built, well-dressed, youngish man, clean shaven, square jawed, sun bitten, whose shrewd grey eyes were as sharp as a gimlet.

"Oh, Mr. Glover," ejaculated the inspector, "you got my message!"

"This is a bad business, Mr. Montgomery," said the detective, "for we have lost one of the finest lawyers in India at a time when his services were most needed. You know that ever since I was engaged by the government in connection with these sedition cases we have had a suspicion, which has grown with time, that behind the active hands in the business there was some subtle brain-worker, some schemer with a perfect genius for intrigue. The case against Baji Rao which is to be heard to-morrow, gave Mr. Ewing a clue to the identity of this mind force. I had followed that clue and have proved the man, at least to my own satisfaction. He is none other than Surrendra Dass, editor of the 'Bande Martaram.'"

"What! that harmless crank!" cried Inspector Montgomery, in frank astonishment.

"A crank in some ways," admitted Glover, "but though he may be dopey on Hindu philosophy, metaphysics and such stunts, his sanity when it comes to self-preservation is simply stupendous." Then turning to Mr. Parkinson—"What did Mr. Ewing do with the bundle of documents that are exhibits in the Baji Rao case?" he asked.

"Why, now I remember, he took them home with him last night."

"They were not found on his body this morning," said Inspector Montgomery excitedly.

"I guessed as much," said Glover. "Those papers were sufficient to convict Baji Rao to-morrow, but more—they contain certain evidence which, linked with other proofs that I have just got track of, would forge a chain that would entirely encircle old Surrendra Dass, and his exposure as the secret promoter of nearly every bomb out-

rage that has taken place in Bombay during the past three years, would be complete. No one could therefore be more interested in the death of the crown prosecutor and the recovery of the documents than Surrendra Dass. You may take it from me that he is the man we want but there are some things we can be sure of in our own minds that it would be hard to convince a jury about. Now, Inspector, what have your investigations so far revealed?"

"Very little, I confess," replied the police officer. "The murderer evidently forced his way into the hedge and remained concealed there. The only footprints are those on the road outside, and the road had been much trodden before we arrived for, as you know, the traffic begins here even before the dawn. My advice would be to pounce down upon Surrendra Dass on the chance of finding the revolver and the missing papers."

"You do no credit to Surrendra's cunning," responded Glover. "By this time he has covered all such traces. Are there no other circumstances whatever?"

"Well yes, but I attach little importance to them," replied the inspector. "Mrs. Trevellyan, who occupies that large bungalow opposite Ewing's place, states that between twelve and one o'clock last night, while attending to her child, she heard a shot, and thought it came from some part of her own grounds. She looked out of her bedroom window, saw nothing and heard no further sound, so went to bed again.

"But here is something peculiar. Mr. Richard McKinnon, the well-known importer, whose house is a considerable distance along the same road, says that he was reading in bed at that hour when he heard two revolver shots, at an interval of about two minutes, in his front garden. He got up after the second report, put on his dressing gown and went out on to the veranda, but could not see anything. It was bright moonlight at this time so if there had been any disturbing sight he would have noticed it. As it was, he saw nothing in the garden to disconcert him, so went back to the house again, naturally wondering.

"Now the strange part of it is that he is quite sure that both reports came from the immediate vicinity of his bungalow. If it were not for the broken hedge and the missing documents, I should say that some reckless or drunken person, while firing at crows, had accidentally lodged a bullet into the back of the crown prosecutor."

Glover's face was now alight with a new interest.

"Have you searched the grounds of the Trevellyan and McKinnon homes?" he asked eagerly.

"We had a look round but found nothing," replied the inspector languidly.

Glover caught up his hat.

"There is not a moment to lose," he said, and the next instant he was gone.

Glover began his investigation in the grounds of the Trevellyan house. It was a big modern bungalow, standing well back in a luxuriant flower garden. He explored it thoroughly, going over every foot of the ground with patient care. At length, from a bed of upstanding tulips, the detective drew forth a dead tabby cat, stiff and unsightly. Examination showed that it had been killed by the bullet of a revolver.

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Mrs. Trevellyan, who had accompanied the detective during his search, "that is Miss Ewing's cat. I should know it in a million. And now I come to think of it, where is Towser?"

"Your dog?" inquired Glover.

"Yes, where could he have gone? I haven't seen him all the morning."

"I think I have an idea where he is to be found," said Glover, "only I can't give you any hope that you will ever see him again alive."

Before Mrs. Trevellyan, who was genuinely upset, could ask for an explanation, the detective had hurried out of the garden and was proceeding briskly along the road towards the McKinnon residence. The closest search of this property however, revealed nothing, and for the moment Glover was nonplussed.

Then standing by the main gate he espied on the opposite corner a clump of flowering bushes. Running across the road he dived into them, and a minute later emerged with the stark carcase of a brindled bulldog whose plated collar bore the inscription, "Towser." The dog was also unquestionably the victim of a revolver shot.

The detective's first thought was to break the news to Mrs. Trevellyan, but he had not gone more than a few yards further along the road before something scattered on the ground arrested his footsteps. Stooping, he gathered up a handful of bloodstained feathers, which he examined with great care and interest.

An empty gharry passed. Glover hailed it. "The police station—*jeldi!*" he ordered.

Inspector Montgomery was preparing his evidence for the coroner's inquest when Glover returned.

"I want you," requested the detective, "to set every man you can

spare to inquire if anyone has seen a winged hawk. Judging by the extent of its injuries I do not think they will have far to look. Let them make the McKinnon house the centre of operations and work in every direction around Malabar Hill."

The old inspector, a kindly and genial official, though hopelessly wedded to the time-honored traditions of red-tape, looked at Glover with the indulgent sympathy commonly extended to a disordered intelligence. Then catching something in the detective's eye that would brook no questioning, he rang the bell and repeated the order to a subordinate.

The same evening a Sikh policeman appeared at headquarters and informed the inspector that very early in the morning a hawk with a broken wing had fallen in front of an outhouse of Sir Bryan O'Lochlan's residence on the Ridge. Sir Bryan's syce had killed it to put it out of its misery, and a pet parrot belonging to the syce was pecking at the carcase when a Hindu gentleman, evidently of good position, came hurriedly along the main drive, saw the birds, grew very excited, and asked the syce, who was grooming a horse close by if he would sell him the parrot. At the same time he flourished before the eyes of the astonished servant two ten rupee notes. The offer was too generous to be refused and the syce had parted with the parrot, which at the purchaser's particular request, was restored to its cage before he carried it off.

These facts were immediately communicated by 'phone to Glover who at that moment was dining at the Taj Mahal hotel.

That concludes the evidence.

Detective Glover is now sitting on the arcaded stone balcony of the Taj Mahal overlooking the darkened harbor starred with the golden masthead lights of native craft. He is smoking a cigarette and thinking hard. Will you think with him? You have ten minutes to decide what the murder of Norman Ewing had to do with Miss Ewing's cat; what the cat had to do with Mrs. Trevellyan's dog; what the dog had to do with the hawk; what the hawk had to do with the parrot. Can you guess it?

* * * * * * *

The time is up. Jim Glover has left his seat on the balcony and is standing before the telephone.

"Inspector Montgomery? Glover speaking. I would like you to come with me to Surrendra Dass's house. I think we can secure from him a full confession. All right. I'll call for you."

Twenty minutes later the inspector and the detective alighted

before a two-storied, blue-and-white painted dwelling, in whose stone-walled garden patch grew a couple of tall date palms. It was situated on the Girgaum Road in a semi-native quarter of the city.

A young Hindu boy, evidently a servant, came to the door. Surrendra Dass, he told them, was having supper. And then, the importance of their business being urged upon him, they were conducted rather reluctantly into a small, sparsely furnished room lit by a hanging kerosene lamp, around which Glover's eyes eagerly travelled. He heaved a great sigh of satisfaction. There on a table in the corner was a green parrot sitting in a cage.

It was a very ordinary green parrot, turning aimlessly round and round upon its perch, with one black lidless eye fixed constantly upon a cheap oleograph of his then Majesty, King Edward the Seventh, which was displayed conspicuously upon the opposite wall. Glover crossed quickly over to the bird.

"Now for a dramatic situation when Surrendra makes his entrance," he said with a quiet chuckle, and the perplexed inspector saw him remove the parrot from its cage and perch it upon his wrist.

A step outside. The door is opened. Before the inspector and the detective stands a small, round-shouldered, clean-shaven Hindu with mild, blinking eyes, clad in a long native tunic-like garment of black cloth.

As he catches sight of the detective, who is now stroking the bird on his wrist, he gives vent to an involuntary sharp exclamation in which there is a note of vivid fear. Then Glover does an extraordinary thing. Catching the parrot by the throat he swings it violently round and round till the life goes out of it.

The Hindu stands transfixed, speechless, with what is apparently an altogether disproportionate horror.

The inspector's face has blank amazement written all over it. This expression deepens, broadens, intensifies even to the point of absolute dismay as the ordinarily sane and self-contained Glover now appears as one possessed, demented, convulsed with frenzy.

With face thrust forward, with shoulders raised, with fists clenched, with eyes fixed in an unseeing glare of hatred he advances towards the native. Surrendra Dass reflects a terror equal to the apparent fury of the man who is approaching him. He falls to his knees, shrinking, cowering, raising trembling hands as though to ward off the wordless menace of the other.

"Spare me!" he shrieks. "In the name of God I meant it not! I was possessed by some devil—I knew not what I did!"

The detective towers in seeming terrible anger above the abject figure cringing at his feet.

"Confess!" he commands. "You killed Norman Ewing."

"I—killed—you!" The words come in a gasp.

Inspector Montgomery, who has by this time exhausted his capacity for astonishment, wonders if it is all a fantastic dream.

"I killed Ewing Sahib." Surrendra Dass utters these words as though they are dragged from him by some strength superior to his own. He is evidently in the grip of a most vital fear. His voice rises desperately—"I have slain his body—but I will atone to his soul!"

* * * * * * *

"You were right in saying that Surrendra Dass is a crank," said Glover to the inspector as they sat in the latter's office an hour or so later. "Regarding some of the beliefs of Hindu philosophy his faith is simply abnormal, accentuated far beyond the accepted theory.

"The shot that killed Norman Ewing frightened Miss Ewing's cat, which I imagine ran out on the road past the murderer. Believing that the soul of the dead man had gone into the cat, in accordance with the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, he must have followed it across the road and shot at it as it sought a hiding place amidst the bushes of Mrs. Trevellyan's garden.

"Towser, evidently aroused by the report, doubtless rushed at the native who, following his exaggerated conception of the doctrine, would think that it in turn had become possessed of Ewing's spirit and was seeking revenge. Evidently the dog chased him along the road till they came outside the McKinnon residence where Surrendra Dass turned and fired. The shot took effect and Surrendra threw the body into a clump of bushes.

"Instantly a hawk arose, and Dass, imagining that the soul of the dead man had now passed into the bird, again fired. You will remember that McKinnon heard two shots at an interval of two minutes, and the interval is accounted for by the time it took Surrendra to drag the dog's body across the road.

"Surrendra now apparently followed the direction of the wounded hawk's flight only to find that the soul had effected still another transmigration—this time into a parrot. In contemplating Surrendra's state of mind I deduced, rightly as it proved, that he would now be glad to secure possession of the soul in such a form

as would make it impossible for it to harm him. The fact that he particularly asked for the cage showed that he intended to take the bird home and not to kill it.

"I was therefore pretty certain that we would find the parrot at his house. You saw his dismay when I killed the bird and his terror when I worked up an H. B. Irving frenzy over him. Of course he then thought that I was possessed by the spirit of the unfortunate crown prosecutor whose death is not so great a public calamity as it might have been, now that you have Surrendra Dass's confession neatly typed up in front of you."

"Boomerang" Smith to the Rescue!*

BY WILLOUGHBY BRENT.

ATURE may not have been kind to him when she named him "Smith," but as usual, she had compensated for it in many ways. The account was probably more than balanced by one ability which he possessed in a remarkable degree—the ability to return whatever he received—favors, knocks, tips, no-matter-whats—and return with due and proper accumulation.

Hand him your half-used match for his cigar and he would hand you a much better cigar than the one you were smoking. Hand him a hot shot of sarcasm and his instantaneous reply would ignite your thought magazine. I have jotted down many of these which I hope to narrate at a later date.

He never held a grudge—he did not need to. He always forgave but he did not always receive forgiveness.

So it was that in the town of Edgemore he was known by everyone, yet I doubt if a dozen could have told you what his initials "B. R." really stood for. The nickname "Boomerang" had so overshadowed any baptismal title, and seemed to fit the initials so nicely, that "Boomerang Smith" he was to all and sundry.

People were continually saying what wonders he surely could accomplish in a big city, and Boomerang himself had often thought of experimenting, yet he was essentially a home-body, and Edgemore was his home and here he stayed.

So he reread the letter and frowned again. Jo Bill in Kansas City and broke, and needing Three Hundred like the very mischief! Hum! Well, Boomerang knew he didn't have Three Hundred to spare just at that time, but Jo Bill—well, Joseph William Snow had done him a favor—he had forgotten just what, but that did not make any difference—he had done him a favor, and it was now Boomerang's move. One more frown (a frown on Boomerang's brow indicated deep thought) and then a smile! He had a scheme that might be worth trying;—somewhat risky and might cause an

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awful lot of trouble for some people, including Jo Bill, but—

And then Boomerang remembered. That little favor Jo Bill had done him had been a favor all right in its ultimate result, but it had nearly put him in jail meanwhile. He would return in like measure. "Like for like, *plus!*" was his motto, and he grinned as he reached for a telegraph blank.

* * * * * * *

Thus it was that the telegraph operator in the city, sleepily transcribing uninteresting message after uninteresting message—that is, uninteresting to him—suddenly started wide-awake and reread the words he had just written:

Mr. J. W. Snow,
2235 Walnut Street,
Kansas City.
Hide out! Five hundred dollars reward for you in Joplin.
Boom.

The messenger boy who called at Snow's address an hour later did not carry a copy of this telegram, but simply a notice stating that there was a message for him at the main office and requesting him to call for same.

Jo Bill did not know why this should be and neither did the boy. As a result, Jo Bill in due season arrived at the window of the main office and asked for his telegram. Another gentleman before the window glanced up at him as he announced his name. The window clerk also, seemed greatly impressed and scanned him carefully before reaching into the rack for the message.

"Is your name J. W. Snow?" he inquired, still studying him closely as though seeking verification of the name in his face or garb.

"It is," said Jo Bill, thinking that such formality must mean that Boom had telegraphed him some money, and his face lit up accordingly.

"Do you live at 2235 Walnut street?" continued the clerk.

"I am staying there at present."

Thereupon the clerk handed him the telegram which he began opening eagerly, but before he had read it the man who had been standing quietly by stepped up to him saying:

"Come with me, Mr. Snow. You are under arrest."

"What!" Jo Bill nearly dropped the telegram. "What did you say?"

"You are under arrest," and the man showed his badge to the astonished Jo Bill.

"What for?" he demanded.

"We'll see later as to that. At present just come down to the station with me."

"Why man, you are as wrong as wrong can be. You may want some Snow, but you don't want this one."

"That may be, but it is not for me to decide, you know. I'm to take you to the station, and there is no way of getting around that."

"All right. Let me read my telegram first. I am looking for some money," saying which he opened the message. The shock of what he read there was much greater than that when the officer had stated he was under arrest. But just for an instant. The signature reassured him, though what it all meant he could not figure out.

At the police station he refused to talk. He had no money to put up for bond and was promptly locked up. That night an attorney to whom Boomerang had wired appeared on the scene and allowed a little light to creep in on the befogged but trusting mind of Joseph William, who spent the remainder of his time taking notes for future reference and without much fear of the outcome.

Meanwhile, in the office of the chief of police, that official was pondering over a telegram. Before him was the copy of his message to the Joplin chief:

> "Am holding J. W. Snow for whom there is a reward in your city of Five Hundred Dollars. Shall we take him there or will you come here for him?"

In his hand was the reply:

> "Never heard of J. W. Snow. No reward here for him or anyone of similar name."

The turnkey was immediately ordered to release Snow, who smiled pleasantly as he passed out.

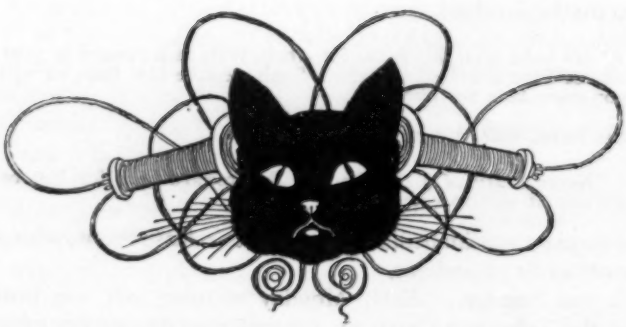
This was Sunday. Early Monday morning suit was instituted against the Telegraph Company for violating the secrecy of a message committed to its care.

In the trial it was proven that a code message to a Mr. J. W. Snow, shown to be a respected citizen of another city, had evidently been interpreted literally by some clerk of the Telegraph Company (perhaps hoping to share in the reward mentioned) who had evidently imparted to the police the information he thought was contained therein; that, as a result, the aforesaid respected citizen had been subjected to the indignity of spending a day in a cell in the city bastile, and of having his picture heralded throughout the land by the sensational press, that had made various and sundry guesses

as to the crime for which the aforesaid was to be called to account. The attorney did full justice to the situation.

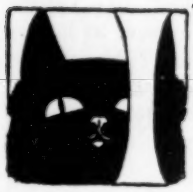
The defense sounded somewhat as though in need of nourishing food, or something else to strengthen and sustain. The result was quite definite.

As Jo Bill's pressing need had been for only Three Hundred, he thought somewhat of dividing with Boomerang Smith, but he was so impressed by the picture the attorney had drawn of the indignities he had suffered, that, with a tear of sympathy for himself, he slipped the money in his pocket and faded away.



Cave Canem!*

BY STUART MACLEAN.



IT was ten minutes past eight when Tubbs dodged into the office. He made a brilliant, if abortive, effort to get to his desk unobserved. As well might he have hoped to pluck the central sun of the universe from its radiant sphere without attracting attention.

"Mr. Tubbs?" cackled the City Editor.

"Yes, sir?" Tubbs made his way between rows of desks and faced the arbiter of human destiny.

"You are late again, Mr. Tubbs. The men on this newspaper report at eight o'clock."

"Y—yes, sir, but—"

"I don't care to hear anything about it, Mr. Tubbs. If it happens again we shall dispense with your services."

No one would have suspected, to hear the City Editor, that he had a certain faint and far-off partiality for Tubbs's work. It was not, probably, that he cared two whoops for Tubbs himself. As a matter of fact, the City Editor was believed never to have really cared for anybody. He was not that kind of a City Editor.

Sometimes a daring member of the staff would try to imagine the City Editor in the bosom of a family, but it was always given up as a hopeless job. There are limits even to a newspaper man's imagination.

He had the reputation of having "fired" more men than all the other City Editors in New York combined, which, taking it by and large, is an appalling thought.

In the mere matter of results he was revered as the greatest City Editor on earth; at the same time it was as devoutly believed in the office that if he should walk down the street and meet the Milk of Human Kindness coming up, he would look at it just once and put it out of business.

It was this general regard for the City Editor that prompted Brundage's exquisite *bon mot*, still revered through the length and

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breadth of Park Row as a classic. One morning the City Editor did not appear. Later it developed that he was sick.

"Dear me," said Brundage, "I do hope it's nothing trivial!"

At that, if the City Editor had not esteemed Tubbs's work beyond all measure for this particular City Editor, Tubbs would long ago have been gathered to his reportorial fathers.

He was known among his fellow serfs as the late Mr. Tubbs. He was the latest man on the staff. Nobody else was ever as late—nobody else dared to be. But then, nobody else had Tubbs's god-like fancy, that could conjure any number of perfectly all right excuses out of the vasty limbo of nothing whatever. Only, there was a vague feeling that Tubbs was too good at it.

Which he was.

"Did you try to lie to him?" asked Froelich, the financial man, as Tubbs skipped blithely back to his desk and prepared to forget all that the City Editor had said.

Tubbs looked aggrieved.

"Didn't hear what he handed Tommy Smith last week, did you?" queried Froelich. "Tommy came over from Staten Island, half an hour late and scared to death. To save time he called up from the Battery. 'This is Smith,' he said. 'Anything for me?'

" 'Oh, it's Mr. Smith, is it?' cooes the Old Man. 'Nothing going on in the Courts this morning, Mr. Smith?'

" 'Not a thing, sir,' says Tommy.

" 'That's strange,' says the Old Man.

" 'Strange, sir?' says Tommy. 'How do you mean, sir?'

" 'Well,' says the Old Man, 'I thought you might have a story about the flood. I hear the tugs up there in the court room.' "

"Well, Smithy lasted, didn't he?" demanded Tubbs.

Froelich borrowed a cigarette.

"Oh, yes; he lasted—but how long is he going to last? Tubbs, my son, Dame Fortune doth not always wear a smiling face. One of these mornings you are going to tell the Old Man just the lie he's looking for. *Cave canem!* Beware the dog!"

"Thanks awf'ly," nodded the cherubic Tubbs. "I guess his bark's worse than his bite. Anyway, he's singing. Listen!"

"It has been just six months," mused Froelich, "since I heard the Old Man sing. Jacky Horner was the goat that day. 'Tum, tum, tum,' hums the Old Man, just like he's doing now. 'Oh, Mr. Horner?—tee tiddle-um—I don't believe—toodle too-too—we'll need you—tra la-la-la—any more.' Forget it, Tubbs! Forget it!"

And that was just what Tubbs did.

Whether it was that the clock didn't go off next morning, or breakfast was late, or he had to find somebody to borrow money from, the fact remains that at 8.15 a. m. Tubbs was in the subway and still a respectable distance from the Bridge.

"Holy Mike!" he murmured, as his watch and the station clocks confirmed his worst fears. "I'm late again! Now what'll I do? If I don't get busy I'm as good as fired. As my old friend Koko puts it—practically, I *am* fired; and if I am fired, why not say so?"

He looked desperately at the advertising signs. They brought no inspiration. It would not answer even to shed his hat and coat in the hall and stroll into the office, pretending to have been there all the time. Something told him that at the fateful hour of eight the City Editor had taken notice.

He re-opened his morning newspaper and his glance fell upon the obituary notices.

"Appropriate reading!" he shuddered. "Wonder if I'll be in there to-morrow?—'Died, at his recent place of business, Thomas Tubbs. Kindly omit flowers.'"

He read on.

"Hm! Here's a lucky man right next door to my house—Bernard Weevyl Stokes, Esq. Buried this morning! Stokes, I could weep for you. *Morituri*, Stokesy, *te salutamus*. All around the mulberry bush! Happy, happy Stokes! Nobody can ever fire you any—"

He stopped short. A colossal thought began to take shape.

"Oh, my aunt's cat! Steady, Tubbs, steady! Anyway, it's new! —ab-so-lute-ly virginal! I'll bet it never was done before! It's an Idea!—a perfect, exquisite, apparently flawless Idea! Tubbs, my boy, now if we can only get away with it!"

He revolved it in his mind. He began to smile. Several times he smote his knee. Finally he laughed aloud.

The express drew alongside of the Bridge station platform. Tubbs did not get out. On the contrary, he leaned back in his seat, rode on past South Ferry and over to the Brooklyn terminus. There he leisurely took another train back. It appeared that Thomas Tubbs actually was trying to see how late he could be.

Instead of 8.10, it was 8.47 when Tubbs entered the office, and, disregarding the clammy atmosphere of sympathy that hung about each desk at his appearance, walked to the rostrum of the City Editor. There was a sadness in his step, as in that of one whom unkind Fate had not passed lightly by. Under his arm he carried

a morning newspaper that was folded open at the obituary notices.

The City Editor looked at Tubbs. Ordinarily, when the City Editor did that, Tubbs, even when most virtuous, felt a little uneasy at the pit of his stomach. This morning, however, he only passed his hand wearily across his eyes.

He did not waste any time.

"There was a man who lived next door to me," he said; "he died. His name was Stokes—Bernard Weevyl Stokes. Here is the notice of his funeral this morning.

The Old Man didn't say anything.

"A strange thing happened," said Tubbs. "As I was leaving the breakfast table I got a message asking me to be one of the pall-bearers—not that I knew Stokes, either—that is, not very well. In fact, I think he must have had very few friends."

An added touch of sadness came into his voice.

"There was nothing else to do, sir. I felt, in common decency, that I could not refuse. I am sorry. That, sir, is why I am late."

He paused. The City Editor reached out his hand, looking at Tubbs. Tubbs gave him the paper, reverently indicating, by the merest movement of a grief-stricken finger, the exact spot where the news of the Grim Reaper's friendless victim might be found.

The Old Man read the notice. The silence in the office was prodigious. Copy-desk, re-write men and reporters, all sat still and awaited the verdict. Privately, they said that Tubbs was a wonder. Tubbs could feel the atmosphere of sympathy behind him begin to warm with those radiations that are inspired by admiration and respect.

"Well, well!" The City Editor was strangely sympathetic. "A singular case, Mr. Tubbs—a ve-ry singular case. Don't you think so?"

"Oh, very, sir!"

"Y-e-s. In all this g-r-e-a-t city of New York, with its mil-lions and mil-lions of people, a poor devil dies, and with so few friends that a neighbor, almost a stranger, I believe you said, has to be called into ser-vice as a pall bearer! Write me a column about it."

Starry worlds disintegrated into innumerable fragments;—cosmic forces were let loose for disaster;—the universe reeled like a god drunk with wine.

"S-sir?"

"Won-der-ful story, Mr. Tubbs! G-r-e-a-t human interest story! I'll run it on the first page. Take all the space you need—if you can't keep it in a column, take a column and a half."

History tells of agonizing moments that try the hearts of brave men as they stand face to face with doom. Tubbs had never cared for any of these people before. Suddenly he became twin soul to every one of them.

If the silence in the office had been profound, now it was unspeakable. The unhappy Tubbs turned towards his desk. His throat was dry. His fingers were cold. What was he to do? To write the story was suicide. To fail to write it—! No; he was going to be obliged to write it. He saw that. He also saw the procession of indignant friends and relatives of the deceased Stokes. Who was Stokes, anyway? Could the Stokes of his wretched story be confused, possibly, with some other Stokes? With a name like Weevyl? Oh, curse Weevyl! Curse all the Weevyls!

He sat down. He put a sheet of paper in his typewriter. He looked at the paper. It was fair and white, unsullied by the words that he, Thomas Tubbs, was going to write thereupon. O innocent paper! O mendacious words! O this! O that! O everything!

"Get in all the details, Mr. Tubbs."

The City Editor was beaming across the vista of desk-tops. His expression was positively benignant. He spoke to Abie, the head office boy, and presently a platter of scrambled eggs made its appearance, surrounded by other matutinal viands.

Never had Tubbs seen the City Editor eat scrambled eggs so amiably. He began to pray that the City Editor would choke—but then one does not choke on scrambled eggs except with high resolve.

The City Editor bit into a piece of toast—the toast didn't choke him, either. Then he said:

"Mr. Tubbs, give me that story a paragraph at a time."

Miserable Tubbs! It was the one thing needed to engulf him in the brimstone lake of his own making. It was a peremptory order.

There was no more time for procrastination. It called for a swift hammering out of phrases, the writing of every one of which filled him with speechless helplessness. With a frightful effort he tried to make himself believe that it was all true, that Stokes had lived and died and been buried according to his late so joyous, now so horrid, fancy. Anyway, perhaps the City Editor would drop dead before the story got into the paper.

He began figuring on a note to MacArthur, up in the composing room.

He looked around. A copy boy was standing by the desk. Happily

would Tubbs have slain him where he stood. He tore the first take out of the typewriter. A moment he looked at it, then threw himself upon the knees of the gods.

"Here!" he hissed.

The story grew. Paragraph by paragraph it went from Tubbs's delirious machine to the City Editor, thence to the copy desk, where awe-stricken, shirt-sleeved slaves jabbed in a comma or two, made a phrase here and there doubly mendacious, and then went rocketing up the pneumatic tubes to the composing room.

Between perfervid paragraphs he managed to write a hasty note to MacArthur and sped it upstairs by a grinning boy:

> "If there is a spark of feeling in your disgusting soul, head off Stokes pall-bearer story. I am dying by inches. Heaven will reward you, and may we meet in a happier land where there are no City Editors. *Tubbs.*"

The lust of the thing got into his blood. It was the original agony story. He became drunken with the magnificence of the lie. He wept with Weevyl Stokes's family. He bestowed upon him a mother, a wife, an aged uncle, a cousin in the last stages of tuberculosis and five children. He named the children. He called for a directory, opened it at random, took the first firm name he saw and gave Stokes a job. Over all he threw a cunning touch of mystery as to the unfortunate Weevyl's antecedents. It takes a lot of words to make a column.

What did he care for retribution?

He pictured the stranger, suddenly sought among the city's multitudes to pay honor where the city itself, alas, ignored a human soul—the city, insensate, greedy, abject before its fetish of gold, caring for no one, dead to sympathy and love and even feeling, hurrying pursuing, making merry, with no time for those who died.

"Wow!" he whispered. "That's good!"

He dispatched a second note to MacArthur:

> "How about blowing us all up with dynamite? No time to attend to it myself, but would welcome change. Oh, Doctor, can't you do anything? *Tubbs.*"

At last the story was finished. The final take had wailed its way up the tube. Tubbs was limp. Kindly Heaven, what next?

It was a message from the composing room:

> "Cheer up. The worst is yet to come. Send up cyanide for operators. *MacArthur.*"

Presently the city editions arrived. The Old Man got his first. He always did. Perhaps it wasn't in? Perhaps the Old Man had

forgotten it? Things had been happening—a society murder over in Brooklyn, a couple of good automobile smash-ups, a police exposure.

No; it was not there!

There was a roar from the desk as the City Editor grabbed his telephone from the hook and demanded to be given the composing room.

"MacArthur, where's that story? No!—that g-r-e-a-t human interest story—Mr. Tubb's story? I want that on the first page. What? I don't care what happened! I—want—that—story!"

Beneficent Providence! It was a respite until a quarter of one, the hour of the next edition—but what a respite! Tubbs became a living, breathing, anguished Damocles. He decided to sneak upstairs and offer to bribe MacArthur with a week's salary—provided he got any week's salary, but the City Editor caught him, called him back, entered into a heart-rending discussion of the name Weevyl and told him to look it up in Burke's Peerage and the Almanach di Gotha.

He anathematized the City Editor, and did as he was told, dripping perspiration on every royal house of Europe.

After that the City Editor put the Silence on him—let him sit there and do nothing. Other men rushed to the telephones, ran out of the office, clipped rival columns feverishly, abandoned their souls to the mad quest of news, news—not Tubbs. The boiling tide passed him by; split, and left him stranded on a lonely rock where he had only the satisfaction of contemplating the wretchedness of his own lot.

By this time the office had begun to think that it was funny. Brundage handed him the first typewritten page of a special story headed "Palls I Have Borne," and Cartwright, out in the art room, sent in a deliciously humorous cartoon. A group of chortlers moved near his desk and chanted in a stage whisper:

"Please, can you tell us if the joke's
On Tommy Tubbs or Weevyl Stokes?"

Tubbs invited them to go to a far country, but they wouldn't.

It was half past twelve when there came another call for Tubbs. The Old Man looked at him benignantly.

"You're not looking well Mr. Tubbs," he chirped. "I'm afraid the day has been rather trying for you."

Tubbs gulped.

"And, by the way, Mr. Tubbs, if you are thinking of changing your address—"

The telephone rang. The Old Man put the receiver to his ear and listened. Then he put it down again.

"A calamity has overtaken our great human interest story, Mr. Tubbs," he said regretfully. "Somebody dropped the metal on the floor. It's pied."

He looked at Tubbs; Tubbs looked at him. Tubbs understood. He knew well enough how quickly the lines of type could be rearranged.

"Thank you, sir," said Tubbs.

The faintest suspicion of a smile came into the City Editor's face

"I wouldn't let it happen again, Mr. Tubbs," he suggested.

"No, sir," breathed Tubbs. "I never will, sir."

And he never did.

True, the Old Man fired Tubbs six months later, but it was for something entirely different.

The Mystic Sign.*

BY EFFIE RAVENSCROFT.

ROM the comfortable depths of her porch rocker Mrs. Dubreuil had for ten minutes been regarding her son from under contracted brows of displeasure. That young gentleman, linen-clad and wonderfully groomed, lay upon his back in the hammock. And he was oblivious alike to his mother's presence, to the sunset song of a robin, to the thrilling carolling of a Virginia nightingale. Nevertheless he was not asleep; he merely appeared to be entranced by the contents of the volume that he was holding before him.

That he should have forgotten her did not amaze Mrs. Dubreuil; but that he should fail to remark upon the birds' songs, should fail to say that a robin singing at sunset prognosticated rain,—well, this circumstance was so amazing that it indicated a point at which maternal interference should be begun.

"Allan!" she said, somewhat sharply.

He did not hear her.

She raised the ebony-and-gold stick that stood beside her chair and brought it down with emphasis upon the floor. For Mrs. Dubreuil had something—a very unpleasant something—upon her mind and she wanted to get it off. At this disturbance, the occupant of the hammock sat bolt upright. His expression was a ludicrous commingling of contrition and delight.

"Mother, I apologize profoundly!" he exclaimed. "But that book so exactly coincides with my views—my 'queer' views—that it took me out of my surroundings."

"Then without a doubt it has to do with the birds of the air or the beasts of the field or the creeping things," his mother commented.

"Wrong!" Allan answered, quite cheerfully ignoring the tinge of sarcasm in his parent's speech. "It's about flowers. The introduction is by a famous nature-poet and the text is by one of the world's greatest naturalists. And they both agree that flowers *feel* —that they experience pain and pleasure, likes and dislikes."

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"Pantheists, both of them," his mother replied. "And you are another. You are certainly a weird person, my son. Anybody who goes through life considering the feelings of bugs and flowers and trying to spare them is apt to be looked upon as 'queer,'—and quite properly. Now I myself am a very tender-hearted person,—I have that reputation, I believe. I would not hurt an animal for the world. And I am passionately fond of flowers, as you know. But I regard all bugs as nuisances. And when a flower ceases to be beautiful, it has served its purpose as far as I am concerned. As for them having feelings,—bah!"

Allan Dubreuil laughed, but there was something besides amusement in that laugh.

"I can't help it mother,—and except for your sake I don't want to help it. To me everything on this earth has some degree of feeling. To me a bug is a little bit of life, entitled to its degree of consideration from us lords of creation. To me a wilted but still living flower lying in the highway under a blazing sun is a thing in pain. Of course this doesn't apply to evil things; the wages of evil is death.

"I always had the strain in me I suppose, from father. And those five years in the great woods with no human companionship save the guide's, finished the job. It seems to me that I am attuned to everything, from a blade of grass up! Why, there's nothing queer about that mother. Except that it stands between you and your dearest desire—"

He broke off and looked at his mother.

She looked back at him with something of defiance and at the same time something of earnest entreaty in the eyes that were brilliant in spite of age and ill-health.

"I wish to talk to you about that dearest desire of mine, Allan. And I am going to begin by warning you that it is for the last time. You will be thirty-five years old tomorrow, Allan. You are the last of your name. My son, when are you going to bring me a daughter?"

"When I get the mystic sign, mother!" he replied, gaily.

His mother paled.

"This is no jesting matter, I assure you, Allan," she said; and her voice was tremulous.

Her son, his feet firmly planted upon the floor now, the book laid aside, looked her calmly in the face. The tenseness of the atmosphere indicated that a conflict of forces was imminent.

"I am far from jesting, mother," he said calmly. "I am as anxious to marry as you are to have me do so. But my wife must be tuned

to my note or there will be no harmony, nothing but discord. And to me a life of discord would be a living death. You say that I am 'queer,'—well, she must be queer in the same way, tuned to my minor key. There is a sign by which I shall know the right woman; and I shall not marry until I get it."

"Allan Dubreuil!" his mother exclaimed. "Do you expect to find outside of India a woman who looks upon bugs as fellow creatures and is careful about the 'feelings' of wilted flowers? You must be mad! You *are* mad! The only reason that your sanity is not generally questioned is that no one suspects you of entertaining such views. As for that, though,—she seemed to have been suddenly struck by a pleasant thought; "why, Bettie Winterson is as crazy about bugs as you are,—and knows more about them, by the way. Why, she went into raptures over one that she found on Chesapeake Beach; took care of it all day and brought it home in a box! There, Allan! A girl after your own heart—the loveliest girl in the South, too! And she cares—I would not say that but this is a vital moment—she cares, Allan! And I will joyfully receive her."

"She is certainly lovely, mother," Allan agreed; but there was no enthusiasm in his tone. "But she brought the bug home in the interest of science; Bettie is some entomologist, you know. She showed him to me, stuck on a card. And she throws her wilted flowers in the garbage. Certainly," he went on musingly, "the garbage pail is not a fitting tomb for flowers."

"Hopelessly insane!" Mrs. Dubreuil said, apparently to the air. "Allan," she went on, "tomorrow will be your birthday. The same day, one month later, will be mine. If, for my birthday present, you do not give me assurance of your imminent marriage, I shall sign the will that is already prepared, leaving you practically nothing. And you have not been brought up to hard labor, my son."

Her son's handsome, sensitive face crimsoned and then paled.

"The threat in the letter of it does not matter, mother," he said, very calmly. "Because I have completed a patent which will mean a sufficient fortune. I am sure, because an expert has offered me fifty thousand for it. I shall not sell, of course. I am going to Washington tomorrow to see about it. Surely you did not think I was going to pass through life an idler! But the spirit behind your threat—!"

At this bomb, totally unexpected, his mother's face quivered. Displeasure and anger fell from her, leaving only a piteous entreaty.

"O, my son!" she exclaimed. "You do not understand. The

old must die, Allan. The desire of my heart is to hold my grandchildren in my arms; yet you—"

Allan had dropped on his knees by her side.

"Mother, I did not guess!" he whispered. "It never before occurred to me that you are older than my first memory of you! I'll ask Bettie tonight!"

* * * * * * *

The moon—a very full, mischievous-looking moon—doubtless looked down upon many boats that night on the "River Potomac," as the old records call it. But it illumined no fairer vision than the one in the boat that was drifting off the Dubreuil estate. That was what Allan had told himself a dozen times. He told himself for the thirteenth time and the air suddenly became electric with something about to happen. The girl, conscious of the impending crisis, trembled. Allan leaned forward.

"Bettie, dear," he whispered, and stopped as soon as he had begun. He bent down, abstracted something from the folds of her fluffy gown, put the something in the palm of his hand and carefully inspected it.

"A green beetle—a June-bug!" he exclaimed.

"Order *Coleoptera,*" said Bettie, the entomologist. Her expression had in it nothing of the feminine horror of crawling things; it might have been termed vicious had the face which wore it been less fair. "Throw it overboard, Allan."

"Why, it's only a dumb old June-bug—perfectly harmless!" said Allan, in apparent surprise. "You know him in a scientific way, Bettie, and I don't know him that way at all. But I know how he loves his life, how afraid he is of death,—I know because I've watched them in the woods. I can tie him up in my handkerchief so he can't possibly bother you and—"

"Throw that miserable creature overboard immediately, Allan Dubreuil!" Bettie commanded. "The idea! A common old June-bug! Perfectly valueless as a specimen."

Allan, a whimsical, enigmatic smile on his face, held his closed hand over the side of the boat.

"Friend," he said, jocosely, addressing the bug, "in the words of Kipling's holy lama, I thus 'release you from the wheel.'"

He opened his hand.

"There go two million dollars and a mother's heart," he said to himself.

* * * * * * *

One might think that, as the nation's capital is in the Sunny

South and has, moreover, somewhat of a reputation as a "swelterer," pongee and panamas would be *de rigueur* there during the summer months. Not so! Washington masculinity, generally speaking, adheres rigidly to cloth and stiff straw. Therefore when a tall and bronzed young man who was pongee-d and panama-d and canvas shoe-d, sped swiftly through the Capitol grounds the next day, he was a remarked person, although by no means in an unpleasant way. Suddenly,—and right in front of the Lovers' Bower although he did not know that,—he abruptly halted his purposeful tread, leaned over, inspected something that was lying in the walk; then he picked up a twig, held it over the something, straightened up, walked over to the grass and carefully deposited thereon the twig and an adherent object.

After this weird performance, he glanced casually towards the Lovers' Bower, to find the eyes of a white-clad girl fastened upon him. She was leaning forward and smiling, apparently in delighted (and delightful!) recognition. His hand went towards his hat but stopped before it reached the panama. She was mistaken. If he had met her he couldn't have forgotten. She wasn't the kind one could forget. He continued his walk but when he had reached the end of that section of the grounds he went no further. Instead, he sat down upon the coping, concealed by a clump of bushes. He wanted to think. Why had that unspeakably lovely girl smiled at him like that, as if he were a long expected and—yes—beloved friend?

In about five minutes the girl came from under the bower, raised her white parasol and started off slowly in the opposite direction. With the parasol up, unless she turned around,—he followed at a safe distance. She had gone but a short way when she stopped suddenly and leaned over, observing something in the path. Then she walked to the grass, picked up a large leaf, went back to the path, leaned over, and a second later carrying something very tenderly she walked across the grass to a great oak.

She resumed the path and her strolling gait, went along for a short way, stooped again (this time almost imperceptibly), and lightly and surely threw something from the sun-baked cement to a clump of digitalis plants.

Allan Dubreuil drew a sharp breath.

"I wonder—!" he mused. "But she'll probably turn around when she reaches the end of this division." And he went back to the coping. But the white parasol went straight on, out of sight.

And presently Allan went to the tree under which she had so care-

fully placed something. Safe within its shade a panting but recovering beetle lay upon a leaf! He went next to the clump of digitalis. Within their cool shelter lay a dying carnation!

A strange light came into Allan's face. Although the sun was beating down upon him he removed his hat.

"The Sign, at last!" he whispered.

* * * * * * *

At two o'clock that afternoon, a taxicab sped swiftly up to the Southern Building and emitted (the proper word) a young man clad in the height of coolness and good taste. And presently the innermost recesses of one of the suites gave up to this young person another young person: John O'Sullivan, distinguished attorney-at-law. Now Jack O'Sullivan, and Allan Dubreuil had not beheld each other for five years and there should have undoubtedly been an attempt to bridge the interval, after a fashion at least, but—

"Pongee and panama,—well, I'm blest!" exclaimed Jack. "Funny, by gar!" he continued. Then he laughed as if at some huge joke. "Pongee and panama, canvas shoes and kickin' beetles!" Then he roared.

"It's the heat, of course," Allan suggested, mildly (Allan had remarkable poise).

"Of course," Jack assented, agreeably. "Certainly it must be. The heat to be sure,—the heat all around, I'm thinkin'." And then he emitted (again the proper word) another sound that would have been a suppressed giggle had it come from a different source.

"Jack, come to your senses, you pleasant fool!" Dubreuil exclaimed. "I want you to introduce me to the loveliest woman in Washington."

Jack stared at him.

"What a simple, modest request," he commented. "Of course, tastes bein' all alike—"

"Oh, the identifying is easy," Dubreuil interrupted, impatiently. "She looks like warm bisque. And she knows that it hurts a flower to die in the sun and that even old dumb bugs—"

Jack interrupted with a long-drawn, hollow groan.

"That'll do," he said. "I'll tell you the rest to save your energy. She was sittin' in the Lovers' Bower in the Capitol grounds this mornin'; and an ass (she thought it was a handsome young man but I know it was an ass) in panama and pongee came rushin' along like he was after a train and stopped right in front of her to help a bug that was on its back and couldn't get up and was a candidate for mashin' at the hands—no, the feet—of the next passer-by. She

was goin' to help the bug herself but the other ass beat her to it."

"Crystal-gazing?" breathed Allan.

"Crystal nothin'!" Jack snorted; but there was a very soft, very startled expression in his Irish-gray eyes.

"Then you must know her!" Allan exclaimed.

"Oh, I know her all right;" Jack agreed. "I know her so well that all I heard from eleven o'clock till one was about a man in pongee and a panama and 'signs' and such palaver."

"Who is she?" Allan demanded.

Jack looked at him tormentingly.

"She may be married," he suggested kindly.

"Never!" Allan answered decisively. "She was made for me. Besides, she's nothing but a girl."

"I give up—have it your way," said Jack. "Her name's Noreen O'Sullivan and she's my sister. She was waitin' for me this mornin'—I was in the Congressional Library. She's refused half the eligible men of our mutual acquaintance and is beginnin' on the other half. Come out to dinner."

And Jack grinned pleasantly and smote him on the back.

* * * * * * *

Three days later a young man leaped from an automobile before it had fully stopped at the entrance to the Dubreuil estate, sped up the path as if treading air and reverently laid a large envelope in his mother's lap.

"The photograph of your birthday present," he said.

Mrs. Dubreuil looked long into the pictured face.

"She has the look, Allan," she whispered, tearfully but happily. "I am old and the old can see. Bettie—Bettie has not got it, Allan. I am glad it is not Bettie."

The Maharaja Tiger Sahib.

BY MICHAEL WHITE.

UCKILY Hubbard's waler had a trick of sitting on her haunches and using her forefeet as a brake in an emergency, otherwise rider and horse would have gone down to likely disaster in the dry bed of a *nullah* (creek). As it was both slid to the bottom of the steep gravel bank with comparative ease. After the scramble on landing, the waler picked herself up amid the loose rubble of the water course, while Hubbard thrust back the pith helmet which had dropped over his face, and proceeded to clear his eyes of dust. In the form of a sudden storm it had been the cause of their stumbling into the *nullah*. The tail of the dust-wave passed over as a red haze, and Hubbard was presently able to survey his position.

"You surely saved us that time, old girl;" he patted the mare's neck. "You brought us down here in great shape, but the next thing is to get out. Guess we're considerably off the track."

He glanced around to mark that on each side the banks of the *nullah* presented an impossible ascent, also that down course the rush of water the rainy season, had cut even deeper into the sandy plain of Rajpur. In the opposite direction, at near distance, a range of broken, precipitous and arid hills rose, bathed in the pink glow of a late afternoon Indian sun, as the source of the *nullah*. Hubbard had heard that an old disused road skirted the base of the hills from the comparatively modern city of Rajpur to the ancient and abandoned capital. The road doubtless crossed by ford or bridge, and that would probably give him the easiest way out of the *nullah*. He had been riding on the plain for exercise, had wandered farther than he reckoned, then came the dust storm, followed by the mishap in the *nullah*. Some people would call that Kismet—as will be seen. In any case he now wanted to get back to Rajpur in time for dinner, his business in that place being to install an electric light plant in the new palace of the Maharaja under contract with his home firm in New York. So he set the mare to picking her way up the creek,

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and was presently glad to discover a cleft in the farther bank by which he could gain better ground. From that point he discerned a bridge, perhaps a mile ahead, and the rest of the way home seemed fair riding.

It was shortly after putting his horse into a canter, that a nearer glimpse than he had ever obtained before of the abandoned city of old Rajpur fixed his attention. Its walls crowned a succession of rocky heights, standing out in bold defiance of whatsoever enemy might come by way of the plain. At three or four miles' distance it still seemed to possess an appearance of its ancient grandeur, and curiosity prompted Hubbard to turn aside for a closer inspection. Thus he came to draw bridle at the base of a narrow paved road. It climbed by a steep sinuous grade to the city, resting on the precipitous heights above. Hubbard lifted his eyes and gazed around with a feeling of impressive wonder.

A flush of rose-pink splendor spread over massive age-worn battlements, which in the shadows of crumbling buttresses sank into tones of deep purple. Here and there the branch of a struggling tree drew nurture from a cannon-shot battered crevice. Yawning breaches were almost concealed by the festooned arms of giant creepers, and the little domed turrets, which at intervals lined the upper walls, stood as the posts of ghostly sentinels. From a perch on one of these floated down to Hubbard, vibrating from wall to rock, the prolonged dismal hoot of an owl. Otherwise there was no sound—none whatever.

In spite of a probable chance of missing the club dinner, Hubbard was drawn by a compelling influence to explore farther. He set his horse up the stone flagged path, its iron-shod hoofs making a prodigious clatter. A toilsome climb finally ended at a massive gate, flanked by the stone effigies of two monster elephants. Seated on their backs were the mutilated statues of unknown past heroes.

Hubbard dismounted, secured his horse's bridle to a hinge still remaining in one of the gate posts, and strolled through the arch. Before him was spread a wide view of crumbling walls, columns supporting roofs of air, roofs which hung upon shreds of masonry, temples and palaces in all stages of ruin and desolation. A peacock startled Hubbard by coming down with a tremendous whir from the broken arch of a queen's cenotaph. He spread his brilliant fan of tail feathers, and marched with majestic strut presumably homeward, up what appeared to be the main street. Hubbard thought that the royal bird might act as a guide, and discreetly followed. He presently lost sight of the peacock, and entered what, at one time,

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must have been a splendid court. It was marble paved, and surrounded by buildings ornately sculptured with figures of Hindu deities. At the angles were the remains of royal pavilions, and in the centre rose a tower in a succession of decorated balconies. Hubbard was inspecting the tower, and had decided its original purpose was to obtain whatever air might be stirring in the stifling hot nights of summer, when he was startled by a deep-throated yawn in the rear. He wheeled around, and for a moment stood transfixed like one of the Hindu statues.

A tiger, in the perfection of development, was sitting on his haunches, and apparently regarding Hubbard with similar curiosity to that which an instant before the American engineer had bestowed on the tower. Hubbard did not wait to further an acquaintance. He backed into an open door of the tower, and fled up a winding flight of steps until he reached the third landing. He would have gone higher had not the tower at that point broken into ruin. So he halted panting, peering down the way he had come, and expecting every moment to see the tiger's immense head and shoulders stretch around a circle of the stairway.

He waited thus several minutes, but no such sinister appearance followed. Presently another huge vocal yawn floated upward, and Hubbard was tempted on to the balcony. He was much relieved to notice that the tiger was occupying the same position, with seemingly no intention of catching a sahib for supper. Moreover, Hubbard observed that the tiger was evidently a well-fed beast, possessing a certain air of languid indolence which suggested that much care for the morrow was not his portion. In fact, when he rose from his sitting posture and strolled around the court, it was as if there came really very little excitement in the life of a tiger. For all that, Hubbard decided to remain on the balcony, since his slight information regarding tigers was not encouraging to a descent. Several times the tiger paced beneath the tower, and on each occasion Hubbard wondered what was going to be the end of the adventure.

The red glow of sunset had given place to the silver splendor of a tropical moon, illuminating in white light the grotesque images of Hindu gods, also the rambling presence of the tiger. A prospect of passing the night on a tower balcony of the dead city of Rajpur was not appealing. Thus Hubbard was beginning to regard the situation as far otherwise than pleasing, when he heard a girl's voice echoing in tones of apologetic summons:

"*Hai*, Maharaja Sahib! Be pleased not to hold this slave respon-

sible for the lateness of your Highness's supper. That is another person's fault. See, the dish is well filled."

Hubbard leaned cautiously over the edge of the balcony, and saw that which caught the breath in his throat. A young girl had entered the court bearing a metal tray, piled high with such provender as might tempt the appetite of a tiger. This she set down on the pavement, and, without any sign of fear, waited at a little distance, while the tiger drew near and sniffed the contents of the tray.

"A'o! Come, Maharaja Sahib," urged the girl. "This is a *burra khana* (good feast)."

The tiger tasted of the fare, on the whole seemed to approve, and reduced the pile at leisure. Presently he stalked off with a goodly morsel in his jaws, the moonlight streaming on the burnished yellow and soft black stripes of his majestic body.

"Wallah! Wallah!" cried the girl, picking up the tray. "Your Highness has done well. By favor of the gods, there shall be even a better supper to-morrow."

Hubbard drew back on the balcony and rubbed his eyes to be sure he was not in the middle of a dream. He glanced over again upon the girl, and thought he would like to know more of one who maintained friendly relations with a tiger. So he climbed down the stairs to the first balcony, from which point of caution he addressed her in polite accents. Her response was to turn quickly toward him in an attitude of slight surprise mingled with curiosity.

Hubbard then observed what he had not been able to gather from his loftier perch. Like her savage friend, evidently toil was not her portion. Draping her graceful form was a *sari* of shimmering filmy silk, heavy at the ends with rich embroidery. Jewels of price flashed in her hair, the jingle of her bangles and anklets was of gold, not base metal. More than this she was unafraid of showing her face to a stranger, looking up at Hubbard with an expression in which frankness and witchery were subtly mingled. Some say that when the Hindu girl is beautiful, her superior in that respect is not to be found on this earth. After her type, so was this girl of the dead city of Rajpur. Whom she might be, was an utterly puzzling question. As she withheld comment on his appearance, it was clearly Hubbard's part to open a conversation.

"Pardon me," he began, with a note of inquiry, "but may I ask if—er—that tiger is your pet?"

At first she did not comprehend, but by patching together the smattering of Hindustani he knew with a similar amount of English in her understanding, the drift of his meaning was made clear.

"O Sahib, that tiger," she explained, drawing nearer, "is of very high caste. In him dwells the spirit of the last Maharaja, Ram Sivaji Bahadur, who was driven by wicked foreign enemies to seek refuge in this place. Therefore that tiger is the real Maharaja Sahib. By favor of the gods, some day he will resume his human form, and again rule over his people in Rajpur. Thus is it spoken by the Brahmins."

Hubbard had penetrated far enough into the rock-like basis of native ethics of credulity, not to attempt a vein of disbelief in response to what was stated as an undoubted truth. Besides, he realized such a course would promptly defeat his purpose of gaining acquaintance with the girl, also her advice how to avoid the tiger.

"And you?" he questioned in a tone of interest. "You are?—"

"I," she replied with a gesture that set the bangles on her wrists tinkling in silvery harmony, "I am the Maharaja Sahib's servant, appointed to minister to his need. Each day, as the Honor has witnessed, I bring him food. Never has the Maharaja Sahib gone hungry," she added with a touch of solicitous pride.

To Hubbard that probably explained his escape, and his tigership's air of indifference. He had never gone hungry! Still, there remained a doubtful element in the case.

"But," he proceeded, "doesn't the tiger—I mean his Highness the Maharaja—occasionally display his savage nature, in keeping with his tiger form, of course? Are you not sometimes afraid of him?"

"*Kubli nakim!* Never, no!" she replied emphatically. "Why should that be? Does the sahib not know that a high caste tiger is much respected by everyone? Has he not heard of high caste tigers who do good by protecting the crops from deer and wild pigs? Only when they grow old and hungry do the people fear them. Then it sometimes happens they lose caste by killing a man. Did I not say the Maharaja Sahib has never gone hungry! He is not old and made angry by pain. Very seldom does such a tiger harm anyone. Then why should I fear him?"

"Um!" mused Hubbard, hardly convinced. "It may be so. I guess you know more about tigers than I do, still—"

He searched the court with a doubtful glance. It was the first tiger he had encountered without protecting bars, and he might have been excused for some hesitancy.

"The Maharaja Sahib has gone," said the girl with assurance. "He will not return here again to-night."

It then occurred to Hubbard that since the girl took the situation in such complete security, his better part was to display a correspond-

ing spirit. So he descended into the court, and joined her with an outward manner as if quite indifferent to the proximity of a tiger.

At first he asked several questions concerning the abandoned city, keeping a watchful eye on the dark places. But in a little all thought of the tiger was merged in his growing interest for his companion. Everything about her suggested a mystery—her rich attire and high caste features being in strong contradiction to her presence in such a place and her unconventional manner. But each attempt to probe into her position, other than that she was the servant of the Maharaja Sahib, was skillfully parried. As to where and how she lived in the ruins of the dead city she would say nothing.

In talking she had led him to one side of the court, which she explained was part of the ancient palace. Thence through an audience hall to a quaint chamber, with mural decorations of faded gilt and endless cubes of mirror glass. A wonderful marble lacework screen stretched across a part of the room, and one side opened on a narrow balcony. Beneath the balcony the rock dropped away in a sheer precipice, and from it an eagle's view of the plain of Rajpur.

"This," she announced, "was the queen's room. Sometimes I come and sit here."

Hubbard looked on the girl with full appreciation of her beauty, and moved to a request.

"And—er—may I come here, too—sometimes?"

"If the Honor pleases. But is he not afraid of Maharaja Sahib?"

"For you—not of a hundred Maharaja Sahibs," he responded recklessly.

She gave expression to a little laugh, and then—slipped from his vision before he was aware of her intention. When he was certain she was really gone, he took mental bearings of the room, and crept cautiously back to the city gate. But he saw nothing of the tiger, who was doubtless enjoying the satisfaction of his supper elsewhere.

Hubbard found his horse restless though undisturbed at the leash, and was soon making a rapid pace along the old road homeward. When he reached comparative civilization, the bazaars of the new city were as lifeless in slumber as the old one in death. His nodding *syce* (groom) awoke to take his horse at the compound gate, and Hubbard went into his bungalow quarters to cast himself on a string bed. In the few moments before fatigue dropped him into unconscious sleep, his mind wandered over the ruins of old Rajpur. His

imagination pictured them restored to their ancient glory, holding for him a dream of beauty in a princess of the royal house, and their romance was happily safeguarded by a benevolent high caste tiger.

But with the morning and the day's practical work, his adventure had left a very real impression. In the first place he tried to gain some idea of the girl's position from an old noble of his acquaintance. Except that it was true the late Maharaja had been dethroned for more than oppressive ways, was said to have taken up his residence in old Rajpur, and dying, was proclaimed by the Brahmins of his cause to have been reincarnated in the form of a royal tiger, little information was obtained. The old noble refused to discuss the girl.

"That is not a good place for the sahib," he said. "Better for him to turn his face in another direction."

But Hubbard was the reversely inclined. Therefore he was on the road to old Rajpur within twenty-four hours of his first visit, provided with a full size magazine pistol, lest perchance another meeting with the tiger should prove the beast to possess a spirit at least akin to the savage old Maharaja. But he did not encounter the tiger, neither did he see the girl though he waited long for her in the room of long forgotten royal beauties. In fact he was compelled to make two or three trips before the object of his quest was attained. Then the gods were kind, and she was pleased to listen to a great deal he had to say, which somehow never conveys exactly the right shade of meaning on paper.

After this followed regular meetings, and Hubbard gathered a little of her antecedents.

She was the daughter of a Rajpur noble. That explained her high caste beauty. But her father was poor, and thus being unable to provide her with a suitable husband in childhood, according to custom had bestowed her as a pious offering upon a great temple. Hence her freedom with one of the other sex, temple and dancing girls being privileged in that respect. Her rich attire seemed to have some connection with serving his tigership, the Maharaja Sahib, whose reincarnation had been established by the Brahmins. But much else Hubbard would like to have known she withheld—until circumstances deprived her of choice in the matter.

The reigning Maharaja grew impatient of delay in the electric lighting of his new palace, and Hubbard strove to come as near as possible rushing the work, which in Rajpur did not mean lightning rapidity. Consequently it compelled him to forego seeing Istar-i-

Rajpur, or Star of Rajpur, as he called the girl, for a whole week. And there was no means by which he could send an explanation without fear of their relations being discovered. He therefore anticipated reproaches at their next meeting. But he found instead that a hundred fears on his part had obsessed her every moment. Had he fallen sick with no one to care for him? *Ahi!* men died very quickly in Rajpur. Had he gone away across the Black River without bidding her farewell? The sahibs were known to be easily forgetful. Had he set eyes on another girl more beautiful than she?

She eluded him to gain the little balcony, where she posed before him in the glory of the setting sun.

"Listen!" she challenged. "Behold, I am a Rajpur noble's daughter, the star of a great temple, and the favored of the Lord Maharaja Sahib. If there be in all the earth one more beautiful in thine eyes, then—"

She tossed her hand over the parapet with a significant gesture, which bore in it the lightness of a feather.

"By all your gods!" he cried, catching her in his arms, "I swear there is no other."

"*Ai! Ahi!*" A sigh of great contentment sped from her lips as her head fell to rest on his shoulder. Carmine and orange tints rioted together in the sky above, far beneath the sands of the plain were as pure gold. It was very silent up on that little balcony of the ancient palace. Presently she started.

"*Mahadiv!*" she exclaimed. "What sound was that?"

An ominous growl was borne to them from the audience hall. She grasped Hubbard's arm convulsively, while an expression of consternation swept into her face.

"Dear Heart, in my thought for you I have forgotten the Maharaja Sahib. For several days he has not been given food. In my care for you I had fed him at a distant part of the ruins. That is why you did not see him. Now he has found us here. I fear hunger may have made him savage."

All the evidence of sound seemed to confirm her alarm. The hollow coughs and angry snarls were hardly significant of inward satisfaction. They could also hear the heavy pads of his steps as if he were searching through the hall.

"Alas! that I should have brought you into this danger," she reproached herself grievously.

Hubbard's hand went spontaneously to his belt.

"Great Heavens!" he ejaculated. "In hastening to you I forgot

my pistol. At close range I might have scared him off with the reports, or got him in a vital spot."

His face clearly showed the anxiety he now felt, principally for the girl. To be cornered on that little balcony by the tiger, savage with hunger, was about as hopeless a situation as could well be imagined. The same motive has led to heedlessness and disaster elsewhere.

For some minutes they waited in suspense, hoping for the tiger's departure; but nearer sounds made it too plain that the beast was tracking them down by scent. Suddenly the girl acted on an impulse. She seized Hubbard and drew him after her back into the queen's chamber. A glance toward the audience hall opening, revealed the immense head and shoulders of the tiger about to enter. Escape thus was clearly barred, but that means was evidently not in the girl's mind.

"Oh, Heart of Mine, quick—faster," she urged, almost dragging Hubbard behind the marble screen. In the darkness of what was little more than a closet, she found a narrow concealed passage—the way she had doubtless made her vanishing exit at their first meeting.

Which of the two thence guided the other, it would be hard to say, for Hubbard had prevented the girl from remaining to face the tiger by grasping her wrist, and refused to relinquish his hold.

In this way they fled as best they could through mere holes hewn out of the rock, down unending flights of footworn steps, and on through black darkness seemingly into the depths of the earth. And following—sometimes nearer, then again more distant—the voice of the beast turned savage hunter.

Once or twice Hubbard, casting a dread look backward, thought he saw the glare of the tiger's blood-red eyes, but he was not certain.

The girl had yielded herself into his protection, with an expression of fatality that to go either back or forth now meant they were utterly lost. She had hoped the tiger would not follow, and they might return. Despair was behind and in front, according to her reckoning.

The significance of this rushed suddenly upon Hubbard when he tripped over an obstruction and barely saved both from tumbling headlong from a narrow ledge into a vast rock-hewn temple, or rather a succession of such leading from one to another. As it was, he stumbled down a few steps on to the floor without injury to either.

It was but a dazed and fleeting impression of the place he retained —its vaulted roof supported by massive carved pillars, with a sculptured frieze of grotesque figures. A flare of torches revealed this—and more. A strange procession was sweeping through the temple. In the van, dancing girls cast a wild chant, echoing through the caverns. Following these, conch shell blowers and drum beaters lifted a hideous noise. Came then half nude Brahmin priests adorned with wreaths of flowers, and lean holy gosains with their ribs packed out in white paint and long hair smeared with wet ashes. Last, upon a litter borne shoulder high, the image of a god blazing with jewels and dripping with the blood of a recent sacrifice.

Into such a scene of weird, amazing atmosphere, Hubbard could have plunged nowhere else on earth save in India.

Instinctively he drew his companion aside, while her frame trembled beneath his encircling arm. More to be dreaded than any tiger's jaws was the vengeance of the Brahmins upon her act of bringing an outcaste sahib to witness one of our sacred rites. Her terror was quickly realized. Their presence was discovered. The procession halted, and from it men of gross fanatical mien advanced upon the pair with threatening gestures.

Hubbard placed himself in an attitude of defense, but the odds against him were clearly overwhelming. His companion sank on her knees, imploring the Brahmins to visit on her head the sahib's unintentional sacrilege. Her plea was treated with contempt, while the crowd of sinister faces pressed closer on all sides.

Hubbard was about to seize a high Brahmin by the throat, and choke him into submission as a hostage, when diversion came from their recent enemy. The Maharaja Sahib crept out on to the little ledge cut in the wall of the temple rock, and took Hubbard's stumbling descent at an easy leap. His supple yellow body with its velvet bands shot through the air, and giving vent to a tremendous roar, he landed amid the crowd. With a sweep of his giant paw he overturned the litter and tossed the bejewelled god fifty feet away, smashing it against a pillar. Evidently there was mighty little respect in the reincarnated but hungry Maharaja Sahib.

Instantly followed a stampede of all the holy men and a terrified tumult. In it Hubbard saw his chance. He picked up the girl, planted his fist squarely in the face of a fat Brahmin who tried to snatch her from him, upset a lean fakir, and fled through the chain of temples. Presently the cries and din of the tiger's advent ceased

to follow. He reached a spacious vestibule, then a cloistered platform and the open air. He found himself at the foot of the rock on a level with the plain. When he judged he had reached a safe distance from pursuit, he endeavored to soothe the girl's terrified spirit.

"But when I return they will kill me," she faltered.

"You shall never return," he assured her.

"Then where will I go?" she questioned with eyes filled with shrinking uncertainty of things unknown. "Lo, am I not now an outcaste?"

"Not with me," he caressed her. "Wherever I am there shall you be in safety and honor always. New Rajpur is not so very far from here. We ought to be able to make it under cover of darkness. Come, Istar. *A'o!* Come!"